

NEW YORK TIMES
22 July 1948

Intelligence—II

Older Agencies Resent a Successor And Try to Restrict Scope of Action

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Friction between Government Intelligence agencies is in a major degree responsible for the current study, headed by Allen W. Dulles, of the Government's intelligence organizations.

Friction is not new to Washington, but the newly-established Central Intelligence Agency, successor to the Central Intelligence Group and to the wartime Office of Strategic Services, has had more than its share. A new agency always has trouble in establishing itself in politically-jealous and power-conscious Washington, and this has been especially true in the case of CIA, which "inherited" some of the Office of Strategic Services' wartime feuds, and which found itself a "nouveau riche" in the field of intelligence amongst old established agencies.

Some gross mistakes of its own and a much too rapid expansion by CIA which led to "empire-building" and retention of some incompetent personnel fed the flames of controversy, but major friction has resulted because of the attempts of the older agencies to retain all their powers and prerogatives and to restrict and confine and reduce CIA's scope of action.

Catalogue of Friction

A brief catalogue of this friction reveals its seriousness:

1. CIA and G-2 were locked in a bitter feud until some months ago; today relations are more correct but not cordial. The issue, in part, was whether or not CIA should take over collection of secret intelligence as well as its evaluation. CIA won out and theoretically, at least, controls all espionage agents operating for this country overseas, but there is still reason to believe that G-2 continues to operate its own agents, although it denies this.

2. Prime antagonists today are the State Department and CIA, or at least personalities in both agencies. CIA representatives overseas have been in virtually all cases attached to American Embassies and have usually used State Department communications facilities. Differences of opinion as to the exact power of the Ambassador over the CIA representative and other issues finally crystallized into open "name-calling" after the unexpected rebellion flared at the Bogotá conference in April.

The full intelligence story of the Bogotá conference never has been told, and probably never can be. Rear Admiral Roscoe H. Hillenkoetter, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, produced—at the quickly dropped Congressional investigation—messages which were hailed in some quarters as proof of our foreknowledge of the revolt.

A careful reading of these messages, however, indicated that they were virtually unevaluated and undigested intelligence; most of them read like clippings from The Daily Worker and were so generalized that they could scarcely be interpreted as accurate forecasts of the revolt.

It was learned, however, that the messages produced for Congress and published were not, by any means, the only indications gleaned of the Colombian situation. Other messages—at least one of them forecasting the participation of some of the Bogotá police and the Communist use of mobile sound trucks to incite revolt—were received, and the factual advance information con-

tained in some of them was accurate and of considerable importance. The full scope of the uprising, and particularly the extensive participation of the Bogotá police in it, were not anticipated, however. The incident clearly revealed some weaknesses in collection of intelligence, greater weaknesses in evaluation and the creaky nature of the mechanism for exchange and transmission of information between the State Department and the CIA overseas and in this country.

Improvements in the latter weakness have been made, due in large measure to the Dulles inquiry, but the State Department is still hostile, not to the concept of the CIA, but to the present organization staffed as it is, and feels that many of its reports and evaluations merely duplicate its own.

3. Friction between the CIA and the Federal Bureau of Investigation really began fourteen months ago when, under a Presidential directive, the CIA took over the intelligence functions that the FBI had expressed in Latin America during the war. The turnover of responsibility in various offices that had been established in Latin America followed no common pattern but generally was a good example of lack of teamwork.

In some Latin-American offices FBI agents offered full cooperation to their CIA successors and delayed their departure to permit a period of overlap and a gradual and orderly turnover. But in a number of instances the CIA agents arrived in the morning to find the FBI files burned and the FBI agents booked for departure that afternoon. The excuse given was that some of the CIA agents assigned to Latin America were not sufficiently "security-conscious."

Shift on Loyalty Checks

More recently, the FBI, which conducts loyalty and security checks for personnel of all Government departments, stopped performing that function, in so far as the CIA was concerned. The CIA was forced, because of this FBI action, to set up its own security check department—now a part of the office of inspection and security—to check records of prospective employees. The FBI recently rescinded its action and is again undertaking CIA checks, but the expense to the CIA and to the Government in personnel and money was large.

4. Considerable difficulties between the Atomic Energy Commission and the CIA were evident until recently. The CIA, criticized by older intelligence agencies because of its alleged lack of security, refused to divulge to the AEC on the grounds of security the sources of its atomic energy information. The AEC insisted that it required these sources for proper evaluation of scientific information. This difficulty seems to have been at least temporarily straightened out by the appointment of a liaison officer within the CIA—a young scientist, whose word as to the reliability of scientific reports is satisfactory to the Atomic Energy Commission. Neither the latter commission, nor for that matter the CIA itself, are satisfied, however, with our scientific intelligence, and we know very little about Russian atomic energy progress.